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PRINTED BY S. H. COWELL,
20, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT, LONDON, E.C.
AND AT IPSWICH.

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PARENTS' REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF HOME-TRAINING AND CULTURE.

"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.*

BY A. T. SCHOFIELD, ESQ., M.D.

(Chairman, Executive Parents' National Educational Union).

THE practical importance of the subject of this paper is, in the face of the increasing struggle for existence, beyond all dispute; but the difficulty of speaking on it is great, because one is compelled to use terms from which many English psychologists still shrink, and yet which most in some way or another are obliged tacitly to agree to. We refer to the unconscious faculties of the mind. Without actually insisting on the phrase that best expresses these, viz., the unconscious mind, there is no doubt that most advanced educationalists, amongst whom we include Herbert Spencer, Herbart, Pestalozzi, Froebel, J. P. Richter, Pfreyer, C. Mason, and many others, clearly recognise that the best and most efficacious form of child-training is that which is addressed to unconsciousness rather than to consciousness; in short, each and all admit, though most probably some would shrink from the words, that there are unconscious psychic powers, and that these can be educated; and not only so, but that it is on their proper education rather than on that addressed to consciousness that the most important part of the character of the individual depends. Dr. Carpenter, for example, says:—

"There are two sorts of influence: that which is active and

* Read on Monday, May 16th, at the Victoria Institute.